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A BILL

— TO —

Promote Mendicancy.

FACTS AND FIGURES SHOWING THAT THE SOUTH DOES
NOT NEED FEDERAL AID FOR HER SCHOOLS.

[A reprint of editorial articles published in the New York *Evening Post* during
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A BILL TO PROMOTE MENDICANCY.

Federal Aid to Education.

[From the Evening Post, January 16.]

The revelations of illiteracy in the South made by the last national census produced a profound impression upon the country. Government in the United States is wielded by millions of voters, and the success of such a system obviously depends upon the intelligence of these voters. Every ignorant ballot is a threat to the community, and government by suffrage, where a majority of those who enjoy the suffrage cannot read the ballots which they cast, violates the very theory upon which our whole system is based.

Yet it was shown in 1880 that in a number of Southern States nearly or quite half of the voters were illiterate. About three-fifths of South Carolina's population are negroes, and 78 per cent. of the male negroes were unable to write their own names, while 16 per cent. of the male whites were as badly off, making 52 per cent. of the whole number of both races. Mississippi, with nearly as large a proportion of negroes, was in almost as alarming a condition, 73 per cent. of her male negroes and nearly 12 per cent. of her male whites being unable to write, or about 47 per cent. of all her voters. Louisiana's population is almost equally divided between the two races; of her negro voters 80 per cent. and of her white voters 15 per cent., being 47 per cent. of all of both colors, were illiterate. In Alabama the proportion reached 46 per cent., and in Georgia 45, while there was not a single State of the States in the "black belt" where the ratio of ignorant voters was not so large as to justify the most serious apprehensions. Of course such a state of things could not continue permanently without grave danger to the republic.

As they emerged from the destitution in which they were left by the war, and the only less disheartening period of corrupt carpet-bag rule, and consequent race hostility, the Southern States began to develop a public-school system. But the States were still poor, the mass of ignorance was vast, and progress was slow. It was plausibly urged that the exigency was so pressing that outside assistance must be furnished, and that the Federal Government ought to come to the rescue of the South. The assertion that such action would be unconstitutional was to be met by allowing all the States to share in the appropriations, while the expenditure of the largest share in the South was to be insured by making the amount allowed each State depend upon the number of illiterates. These arguments proved effectual to secure the passage by the Senate in the Forty-

eight Congress of what is known as the Blair bill, proposing to appropriate \$77,000,000 during a period of eight years for distribution among the States upon this basis. The bill went through the upper branch by a vote of three to one, 20 Republicans and 13 Democrats supporting the measure and 9 Democrats and 2 Republicans opposing it; but it was never taken up in the House, and lapsed with the end of the session.

Senator Blair has reintroduced the bill, and another strong effort will be made to secure its enactment in the present Congress. The majority in its favor was so large in the last Senate that there is little question of its passing the upper branch again, and its friends profess confidence that a majority can be secured for it in the House. Not only for its immediate consequences, but also, and much more, for its far-reaching bearing upon the relations of the Government to the States, the proposition is perhaps the most important which will come before the present Congress.

The plea in favor of the bill, as we have said, is plausible, but we believe that it is fallacious, because it takes a short-sighted view of the future. Illiteracy is a bad thing for a community, but it is not the worst thing. It is important for the South that its present ignorance should be dispelled as soon as possible, but that is not the most important thing for the South. The vital element of any success that is worth achieving in this world is self-reliance. The man who works his own way to an education may not acquire it as soon or get as good an education as one who receives it at the hands of charity, but it will be worth a great deal more to him, and he will be worth a great deal more to the community. The same principle holds as true for the State as for the individual. The American colonies developed into infinitely stronger commonwealths by reason of having to make their own way in the world than they ever could have become by the most fostering care of the mother country.

What was true a hundred years ago is true to-day. Illiteracy in the South is a terrible evil, and its removal will be a vast work. The burden must be a heavy one for the South to bear, and it would be temporarily a great relief to unload a share of it upon the broad shoulders of the general Government. But the education of its coming voters is the first duty of an American commonwealth. It is not the business of the general Government, and nothing could be more demoralizing to a State than the assumption of its own duty, in whole or in part, by the authori-

ties at Washington. Undoubtedly more Southern voters will be able to read eight years hence if the Federal Government expends \$77,000,000 upon Southern schools, but the South can much better afford to have fewer intelligent voters eight years hence than to have purchased their education at the expense of its own self-reliance and self-respect.

The truth is that the Southern States are already proving their capacity to grapple with this problem alone. Take, for example, South Carolina, which was in the most desperate condition. In 1874, under carpet-bag rule, there were only 110,416 pupils in her public schools. In 1884 the number had increased to 185,619. In Mississippi the number of pupils rose from 166,204 in 1876 to 266,996 in 1883. In Florida ten years increased the annual roll of scholars from 20,911 to 58,311. There is not a State where the gain has not been most gratifying. In most commonwealths the percentage of children of the school age who attend school already approaches that in the North—being, for instance, 63 per cent. in South Carolina and only 69 per cent. in Maine—and in some Southern States it even exceeds the proportion in some Northern States. The defects of the educational system are that the teachers are not so good and the terms not so long as a rule in the South as in the North. But these defects can be overcome by the growing prosperity of the South, which will enable the States to raise more money for their schools. It must be remembered that the South has but just begun to realize the possibilities of her future under freedom. Every year will find her able to do more for education than the year before.

Let not the nation make the fatal mistake of teaching the South to depend upon the Federal Government for the maintenance of her schools, and thus to lose that quality of self-reliance which no amount of education to short order can make up for. The best friends of the South are those Southerners who recognize the folly of this short-sighted policy. The North feels generously toward the South; it is in danger of yielding hastily to its first impulse in this matter. The most effective opposition can be made by Southern men who base their opposition upon the right ground. Ex-Governor Chamberlain, of South Carolina, who himself stoutly opposes the Blair bill, not only for its unconstitutionality but also for its wrong principle, quotes the words of one such Southerner, an ex-slaveholder and ex-Confederate soldier, who puts the strongest argument against the Blair bill in this most forcible style:

You know my deep interest in the public-school system. Hence I am opposed to national aid. You cannot plaster the South with this system. It is a growth, and its certain and healthy growth can only be secured by each community providing for its own schools. The Blair bill is simply, in another form, the old hallucination, "forty acres and a mule," which has caused more briars and sassafras bushes to grow in Southern fields than all else.

Connecticut's Warning Against the Federal Education Scheme.

[From the Evening Post, February 6.]

The question of Federal aid to education in the States, with an especial view to overcoming illiteracy at the South, is so important that it merits thorough discussion. The letters that we have received since our recent article, and the comments of other journals upon the views then expressed justify a recurrence to the subject. The great difficulty hitherto has been that the public has not given much thought to the vital issues involved, most people hastily yielding acquiescence to the scheme upon hearing the plausible surface arguments in its favor; signs of a disposition to get at the fundamental principles underlying it are therefore welcome.

As we previously remarked, the North feels generously toward the South, and is therefore favorably disposed toward any measure that promises to dispel the cloud of ignorance which has overspread that part of the country. Moreover, many Northern people feel as though the nation was under an obligation to assume a portion of this burden. The *Christian Union* speaks for this class when it says:

An appropriation for education in the Southern States is not a gift of charity; it is the payment of a debt due by justice. The nation shares in the responsibility for slavery. It is wholly responsible for emancipation and enfranchisement. If the South had enfranchised the blacks, we might leave the South to educate them; but in putting the ballot into one hand we obliged ourselves to put the school-book into the other.

It is also urged that the Federal Government virtually rendered educational assistance to the new States in the West by setting apart school lands for them, and that the Southern States, with the ignorance thrust upon them by emancipation, now stand in far more urgent need of assistance from the nation.

All the pleas for Federal aid proceed upon the assumption that such aid will be a good thing for the South. It is this assumption which we combat. We maintain that the worst thing which could befall the cause of education in the South would be a series of liberal appropriations from the national Treasury for a series of years. We mean, of course, the worst thing in the long run, for no judgment upon such a matter is of any value which is not based upon a long look ahead. We are ready to admit that more Southern voters might be able to read eight years hence if \$77,000,000 should be appropriated by Congress for use chiefly in Southern schools than if the States were left to their own resources; but we insist that this temporary gain in intelligence would be purchased at the cost of a permanent loss in character vastly more important—the loss of self-reliance and self-respect.

One fact counts for more than a volume of theorizing, and it is therefore most fortunate that the demoralizing influence of outside school funds can be conclusively demonstrated from the ex-

perience of one of the oldest States in the Union. When Connecticut sold her Western Reserve lands, the proceeds were devoted to a school fund, in the expectation that this assistance would serve materially to elevate the standard of public education. The fund proved quite productive, the income during the early part of this century varying from \$70,000 to \$100,000 a year, which was a large sum of money for a small State in those days, when the cost of maintaining schools was so much less than now.

Before they had this outside income the people of Connecticut supported their schools entirely by taxation, just as the people of the South are doing now. What was the effect of receiving this assistance? The answer shall be furnished by Mr. C. D. Hine, Secretary of the State Board of Education, who is recognized as an authority in the matters of which he speaks. In response to a request from the *EVENING POST* for a succinct statement of the facts, Mr. Hine writes:

The school fund derived from the sale of Western lands yielded an income last year of \$120,255, which amounts to 80 cents for each person of the school age. The average expense of educating each of these persons throughout the State is \$10.31, so that the fund now furnishes about 8 per cent. of the total cost. In those towns and cities where the people insist upon good schools no reliance is placed upon these permanent funds. Indeed, the history of our State shows conclusively that at the time when the fund was most productive, yielding \$1.40 or \$1.50 for each person of the school age, and when towns depended upon it, as they generally did, for the support of their schools, the schools themselves were poor and short. In fact, this was the darkest period of our educational experience. A very striking deterioration took place as soon as the fund became productive, and the income began to be distributed. Before that period schools had been maintained at least six months, and at most nearly the whole year, according to the size of the district. After, and not long after, this new source of income was opened, the usual length of schools was reduced to only three months, or just the time that this fund would maintain the schools. The sums which came as gratuities relieved the people of responsibility and deadened their interest, until the schools were continued only so long as the charity lasted. Happily the danger from this direction is passed and cannot return. The fund has probably reached its greatest productiveness, and the per capita will constantly decrease. The public schools must draw their sustenance from the people who are directly or indirectly benefited by them.

The Blair bill simply proposes to do for the whole South what the Western Reserve fund did for Connecticut. Human nature is much the same everywhere, and if one were to try differentiating it, he certainly would not find the Southern character less likely to be demoralized by subsidies than the Northern. The men who had this fund set apart for the benefit of Connecticut's schools undoubtedly thought that they were doing the State a great service; but it has proved a curse, and the people are now congratulated that "the danger from this direction is passed," because the growth of population has forced them to tax themselves in order to educate their children. The *Christian Union* and the people who share its opinion that Federal appropriations for Southern education would be simply "the payment of a debt due by justice" are honest in their

desire to benefit the South, but if they could accomplish their design, they would have proved its worst enemies.

The truth is that the South can educate herself, and is already beginning to do so. It will be a hard job, but her people, black and white, will be more manly, more self-reliant—yes, and more intelligent too, in the long run—if they are left to work out their own salvation. The most hopeful sign for the South's future is that clear-headed Southern men are protesting against the efforts of well-meaning but short-sighted Northerners to give the South school money out of the Federal Treasury, which these Southern men see that she ought to raise and can raise herself.

A Bill to Promote Mendicancy.

[From the *Evening Post*, February 11.]

Mr. Blair, of New Hampshire, has succeeded in having his bill for Federal aid to education in the South made the regular order in the Senate, and this most important proposition is thus again before Congress for discussion. At the same time the press of the country manifests signs of giving the subject more careful attention than it has previously received, and there is evidence that many journals which have hastily endorsed the scheme in past years are now weakening in their confidence that it will prove a good thing in the long run. The recent articles in the *EVENING POST*, taking ground against the project both upon theoretical considerations of public policy and upon the confessedly bad results of a somewhat similar grant in Connecticut many years ago, have called forth so many expressions of opinion from subscribers and from contemporaries that we revert to the subject as being evidently one in which the public is keenly interested.

The *Boston Herald* is a newspaper which has hitherto favored the Blair bill, in the belief that it would stimulate the cause of common-school education, but which now says, "If it will not, let the aid be withheld," and scarcely conceals a growing doubt whether the scheme would not hinder rather than help. Its chief reason for still hoping that Federal aid to Southern schools might prove beneficial is based upon certain statements made by a Northern gentleman who has paid much attention to this question, and who strongly advocates the Blair bill. We quote his argument, which is the strongest ever made for the scheme, as summarized by the *Herald*:

Emancipation, the act of the nation, added one-third or more to the school population of the former slave States, and that after two-thirds of the property of that region, reckoning the slaves as part of it, had been destroyed by war. The freedmen and their children had been kept in compulsory ignorance under the authority of the National Constitution, which recognized and protected slavery. It was, therefore, physically impossible for the people of the Southern States to assume the task of educating this mass of ignorance. The Rev. Mr. Mayo, an excellent authority on this question, says that "there are now, in sixteen Southern States, 4,000,000 white and 2,000,000

colored children and youth of school age, of whom not one-third can be said to be in any effective school." Seventy per cent. of the negroes over ten years of age are illiterate, and the ratio of illiteracy for blacks and whites alike is increasing. And this in spite of the fact, to which Mr. Mayo bears testimony, that "no people in human history has made an effort so remarkable, all circumstances considered, as the people of the South have done during the past fifteen years, in what they have already done for the schooling of their children." Last year the Southern States raised no less than \$17,000,000 for school purposes, of which nearly one-third was for the education of the children of their former slaves. In many of the States the school tax is higher in proportion to the property than in Northern States that maintain a splendid school system. And yet more than one-half the children of school age are growing up illiterate, or without primary instruction that is worthy of the name.

When so great weight is attached to the opinion of a man, it is essential to know something about his qualifications to judge as to the wisdom of adopting a far-reaching measure of national policy. The Rev. A. D. Mayo is a gentleman of the highest character, a clergyman of excellent standing in the Unitarian Church, and a lifelong friend of education. Some years ago he abandoned regular church work to devote himself to the cause of education in the South, and in that cause he has labored with great zeal and entire unselfishness. Mr. Mayo has thus enjoyed unusual opportunities for learning the state of things at the South, and he is entitled to be heard with great respect. But, after all, he is that most dangerous of all guides, a man with a hobby. Moreover, it is evident that the influence of his former environment causes him to view Southern schools through glasses which distort the situation. Mr. Mayo lived for a number of years, while his children were going to school, in Cincinnati, and for a number of years more in Springfield, Mass.—both cities with excellent systems of graded schools in session nine or ten months out of every twelve. He went down South, and found that in the rural districts the common schools were open only three or four months a year. He was naturally shocked, and jumped to the conclusion that the nation must go to the aid of the Southern States, or their children would never get a decent education. His radical mistake was in supposing that the situation in the rural regions of the South was much different from the situation in the rural regions of the North, or much worse. If he had gone from Springfield through the hill towns of western Massachusetts, he would have found schools which are but little more "effective" than exist in the South and are in session but little longer. Less than 5 per cent. of all the inhabitants above the age of ten years in Maine, New Hampshire, or Vermont, in either 1870 or 1880, were unable to read, and yet the official records show that the average length of the school year between 1860 and 1870 was only 119 days in Vermont, 99 in Maine, and 97 in New Hampshire, while in eight of the sixteen old slave States schools are now

open 100 or more days, and in only three States less than 75 days.

When the *Herald* and other believers in Mr. Mayo quote his dictum that not one-third of the children in the South can be said to be in any "effective" school, they must remember that it is the testimony of a man who would undoubtedly have pronounced the schools of twenty or twenty-five years ago in many New England towns ineffective, and yet that those schools kept the ratio of illiteracy in those States below one in twenty. The *Herald* does not make it quite plain whether the statement that "the ratio of illiteracy for blacks and whites alike [in the South] is increasing," was made by Mr. Mayo or is its own, but whoever its author, it is obviously a gross and inexcusable misrepresentation. The official reports of the Superintendents of Education in every Southern State show that the number of attendants upon the public schools is increasing steadily and largely year by year, mounting in South Carolina from 110,416 in 1874 to 185,619 in 1884, and in Mississippi from 166,204 to 266,996 in the eight years ending with 1883. If illiteracy is really increasing with such extensions of school advantages, national aid would only aggravate the evil by enlarging the number of pupils, and the true thing to do would be to shut up the schools. But it is not true, and the census of 1890 will undoubtedly show a great diminution in the illiteracy of every Southern State. It is a scarcely less flagrant misrepresentation to give the impression, as Mr. Mayo does, that "not one-third" of the children in the South are getting a decent education. The truth, as shown by the reports of State Superintendents, is that the percentage of attendance to the whole population of the school age, even in States with so large a negro preponderance as Mississippi and South Carolina, has already reached almost as high a point as in thinly settled States at the North.

There remains only the plea that the schools are not as good as they ought to be, and yet that the Southern people cannot raise any more money for education, so that they must have help from the Federal Treasury if there is to be any further improvement, which everybody concedes is essential. It is a perfectly conclusive answer to this plea of Mr. Mayo's that it is now several years since he began telling the Southern people that they could not raise any more money for schools, and that they have gone on raising more money all this while. For example, South Carolina and Tennessee increased the amount devoted to this purpose between 1880 and 1884 by nearly 33 per cent.; Georgia, Alabama, Missouri, Virginia, and West Virginia, almost 40 per cent.; North Carolina and Florida, 50 per cent.; and Arkansas and Texas, considerably more than 100 per cent.

If anything more were needed to show that the South is capable of "padding her own

canoe," it is furnished by the voluntary testimony of Southern men who are devoted to the cause of education in those States where the load is heaviest by reason of the large proportion of negroes in the population. In Mississippi almost 60 per cent. of the people are colored, yet this is what Governor Lowry, of Mississippi, said about education in that State in his message to the Legislature last month:

It is a source of no little gratification to be able to state that the common-school system is in a healthier condition, and that the complicated machinery of the department is working more smoothly and satisfactorily than at any previous time in its history. My information from various sources satisfies me that the interest in favor of our system of public education as established and maintained by law is steadily increasing, and assuming a more intelligent and well-defined form of action. I learn from the able School Superintendent, General Smith, that the attendance of 1884 was largely in excess of that of any previous year, and will, he supposes, be greater for 1885. Especially is this increase marked among the colored people, showing more attention and concern about the education of their children than manifested heretofore. It may be truthfully said that the educational outlook of the State is hopeful, and the object of every one connected with legislation should be to revise, improve, and perfect our school system.

The proportion of negroes to whites is even larger in South Carolina than in Mississippi, nearly two-thirds of all the people being colored, yet Governor Thompson—himself for years the State's efficient Superintendent of Education, and one of the most devoted friends of public schools in the whole South—was able to make this encouraging showing in his message to the Legislature last November:

The report of the Superintendent of Education shows a most gratifying progress in the work of the public schools, and in the healthy growth of popular sentiment on the subject of education. Year by year the friction that attended the operation of the free public-school system in the earlier period of its establishment has been reduced, and in all particulars controllable by the school officers it has almost disappeared. The number of pupils enrolled in the public schools during the year just closed was 178,023, of which 78,458 were white and 99,565 were colored; the number of teachers employed was 3,773, being an increase of 89 over the number employed during the preceding year; and the number of schools was 3,582, being an increase of 80 over the number in operation during the year 1883-84. The length of the school-term was three and a half months. It was shown in the annual report for 1884 that the limit of ratio of enrolment to the school population of the State had been nearly reached, and that the increase in this respect would, in the absence of unfavorable conditions, only keep pace with the natural increase of population. This indicates that the schools have been brought within the reach of the people and are generally used by them. The average attendance of pupils for the school term shows an increase of 7,949, and has now reached nearly 89 per centum of the enrolment. That this percentage should be so high among a people mainly rural is highly encouraging, because it demonstrates that the work of the schools has become more effective and better appreciated.

We do not see how any candid person, who will take the trouble to investigate the facts, can avoid the conclusion that the work of public education in the South is now in a most hopeful condition, and that the worst thing which could possibly befall the cause would be the assumption by the nation of a burden which the South has

shown herself able to carry alone, and will be all the stronger in the end for having carried alone. There was a time when an appeal for national help might have been urged with force. Just after the war, when the South was plunged in poverty, when, as in South Carolina in 1869, not one child in ten attended public schools, it might have been fairly urged that Congress should come to the rescue. But half a generation has passed since that time, and the South, by her own confession, is now able to do the work, and will be able to do it better every year as she grows richer. The short-sighted Northern philanthropists who try to persuade her that she is too poor are her worst enemies. Mr. Blair's bill only needs to be seen in its true light, as a bill to promote mendicancy, and it is sure to be rejected.

How the Bounty System Would Work.

[From the Evening Post, February 18.]

An attempt is made to break the force of the argument against the Federal education scheme which the EVENING POST recently drew from the disastrous effects of the Western Reserve Fund upon Connecticut's schools, by the claim that the cases are not parallel. It is said that the aid which Connecticut received was an out-and-out substitute for local taxation, while the Blair bill promises aid only in proportion to the sum which the State raises itself for educational purposes, and therefore that it would stimulate, not lethargize. It is true that under the Blair bill no State can draw more money out of the Federal Treasury for educational purposes in any year than it expended for similar purposes out of its own revenues the previous year; but human nature in the South would prove very unlike human nature elsewhere if the influence of this outside subsidy were not to check the present tendency toward heavier local taxation for the schools. Take, for example, the case of South Carolina, which has the largest proportion of negroes in her population of any State in the Union, and so the heaviest load of ignorance. Her proportion of all the illiterates in the country would entitle her under the Blair bill to \$416,617 from Washington the first year, \$595,167 the second year, and \$892,751 the third year, from which height the total would sink down to \$297,583 in the eighth year, provided she raised corresponding sums herself—or to such proportion of these sums as would correspond with what she might raise herself. South Carolina expended for schools in the last year \$428,419, and so would be entitled to \$416,617 in the first year under the Blair scheme. The progressive element in the State realizes the necessity of raising still more money for schools than the present taxes yield, but the old fogies who "don't believe in public schools," the lazy, the shiftless, the constitutional grumblers, and the people who always insist that taxes are too high, think that

\$428,000 a year is too much to expend upon education—or, at any rate, too much for the State to raise.

Once let the people know that they can reduce their own school taxes one-half at a single stroke, and yet draw enough from Uncle Sam to have, in all, the \$428,000 a year for schools which is now raised, and the disposition to cease relying on their own resources would inevitably prove as strong in South Carolina now as it proved in the case of the New England people fifty years ago. The men who devoted the Western Reserve fund to school purposes in Connecticut did not intend to make it a substitute for local taxation, but only a supplement of the latter, enabling the people to improve their rude schools, erect more suitable school-houses, employ better teachers, and raise the educational standard generally. Yet the very knowledge that they had an outside income assured operated to make the people unwilling to tax themselves enough to keep the schools as good as they had been when they depended solely upon themselves, and this in a State where popular education was devoutly believed in. The Blair bill says in so many words to the people of South Carolina, "Cut down your school taxes one-half, and the grant to which you are entitled from the Federal Treasury, combined with what you will then raise yourselves, will give you as much money for educational purposes as you have now." The man who, in the light of Connecticut's plain warning, supposes that the easy-going people of South Carolina, or of any other Southern State, will not yield to the temptation which overcame the severe principles of a Puritan community, has a confidence in Southern human nature which may do credit to his heart, but which does not speak well for his head.

[From the Evening Post, February 17.]

We are glad to see multiplying signs that Northern newspapers, which have in the past hastily endorsed the principle of the Blair bill, are beginning to see the dangers of the scheme. The Springfield (Mass.) *Union* has not yet reached the point where it is ready to oppose Federal aid to education in the South, but it admits that it will never do to pass the bill in its present shape. The *Union* confesses that the *EVENING POST* is right in holding that a State like South Carolina, which raises \$428,000 by taxation now and would be entitled to \$416,000 from Washington the first year under the Blair bill, would be irresistibly tempted straightway to cut down its taxes one-half, inasmuch as with the national subsidy it would still have as much money available for the schools as before. The *Union*, however, thinks that this difficulty could be "easily prevented," and suggests as a simple expedient a provision

that, in order to receive Federal aid, the appropriation made for education by any State shall not fall below a certain sum. "say the average of the preceding five years." But a little examination will convince our Springfield contemporaries that any such device is impracticable. Take the case of South Carolina. The expenditure for schools in the last year was \$428,419, which was an increase of nearly one-third upon the amount raised in 1880, and a similar gain during the following five years would make the amount raised by local taxation, if the State is left to itself, about \$570,000 by 1890. But "the average of the preceding five years" is only \$382,396, and a condition that South Carolina must raise only that average in order to receive Federal aid would still leave the people free to raise even less than they now raise—and much less than they soon ought to raise—while they would still be sure, with the grant from Washington, of a larger educational fund than they now have.

The impossibility of making any condition which would be effectual to prevent the demoralization of local energy by national assistance becomes still more manifest when it is remembered that there are a number of States to be considered, in different stages of development and with different prospects of future growth. South Carolina has increased her school expenditures only about one-third in the last five years, but the gain in North Carolina and Florida has been about one-half, and in Arkansas and Texas considerably more than 100 per cent. Arkansas, a State which, unaided, is making most gratifying progress, raised \$238,056 in 1880 and \$561,745 in 1884; the average of the five years is only \$434,308, and if she raised only the latter amount, the addition of her \$227,561 from Washington would give her in all a larger school fund than she had last year; but at what a loss in character as compared with her being left to herself and going on in the increase of taxation as she has become accustomed to! The average expenditure of the past five years in Texas was \$1,024,470, but in the last year the amount was \$1,661,476. Can anything be imagined which could have a worse effect upon a State which is making such rapid progress in education—a State, too, which boasts that she has more liberally endowed all her educational institutions than any other State in the Union—than a proclamation by Congress that Texas may stop increasing her taxation for schools, and the nation will give her enough to make up a larger fund than she now has? The people who are trying to devise some way of giving the Southern States school money that will not demoralize those States and check the present most gratifying tendency toward heavier local taxation, will find that they have essayed a hopeless task, and when they have made this discovery, we count upon their frankly confessing their original blunder and opposing the whole scheme of Federal aid.

The Plea of Southern Poverty.

[From the Evening Post, February 18.]

The *Atlanta Constitution*, as the leading newspaper of a commonwealth which justly calls itself "the Empire State of the South," does little credit to either its State or itself when it—rather shamefacedly, we are glad to observe—pleads that the nation should come to the help of Georgia's schools. It is true that the public schools of Georgia fall far short of being as good as they ought to be, but it is also true that Georgia is abundantly able to makethem worthy of so prosperous a State. Georgia, as the *Constitution* would be the last paper in the country to deny, is one of the richest States in the whole South, and is hardly surpassed by any in the steady and rapid development of its resources. Yet Georgia is doing much less toward the education of her children than other States which have not only less wealth, but also a greater load of ignorance. Florida in 1880 had only about one-sixth the population and less than one-eighth the resources of Georgia, while the percentage of negroes to all the inhabitants was about the same in the two States; yet Florida expended \$172,178 upon her schools in 1884, and Georgia only \$653,868, or not two-thirds of what she ought to have raised to keep pace with Florida. Mississippi, in 1880, had but three-fourths Georgia's population, and only about half her amount of wealth, while nearly 58 per cent. of Mississippi's inhabitants were negroes, against only 47 per cent. in Georgia; yet Mississippi expended \$803,876 upon her schools in 1884, or \$150,000 more than Georgia. The *Constitution* really must not ask the country to believe that the State which it represents as being at all other times rich, progressive, and prosperous, becomes suddenly so poor, when it comes to the matter of raising a school fund, that it cannot do even so well as Florida or Mississippi.

[From the Evening Post, February 23.]

There is a most amusing contrast between the tone of a Southern newspaper when it sustains the Blair bill and its attitude on other occasions. Usually it represents that the South is growing in prosperity at an almost phenomenal pace, that the negroes share in this prosperity, and that no part of the country offers a better field for the immigrant. But when the Blair bill is mentioned, the same paper talks in a doleful strain about the poverty of the South, the losses of the war, now more than a score of years in the past, and the discouraging condition of the blacks. The effect is almost ludicrous when these conflicting utterances are made perhaps in successive issues of the paper. Thus the *Atlanta Constitution* was recently arguing that the whites of the rich State of Georgia needed national assistance to educate the children of that State, since the population is composed so largely of negroes; yet only a day or two later, in expounding the actual

condition of the negroes in that region, it said: "The great mass of them are quiet, industrious, and comfortable. They are learning the lessons of economy and prudence. They are beginning to save money, they are acquiring property, and they are making themselves homes"—in short, they are very much like the laboring population in Northern States which have a large foreign element. So the *Raleigh News*—published in a State where the number of pupils in public schools increased more than 60 per cent. in the last decade and where a report just published shows that there are fully 45,000 pupils in the private schools and colleges—was pleading for assistance on the ground of Southern poverty a few days ago; yet on Saturday it published an article entitled "A State to be Proud of," which sets forth in justifiable terms the growing prosperity of North Carolina, and says that "her material condition now is probably better—more firmly founded—than that of any other Southern State." We are glad to note that the Southern papers which defend the Blair bill against the *EVENING POST*'s criticisms do so in an evidently half-hearted way, which shows that the editors really agree with the Southern Senators who have done themselves so much credit by opposing it. The *Atlanta Constitution*, indeed, has reached the point where it says: "We commend the views of the *EVENING POST* to those who would have the Government provide for and prescribe the education of the citizens."

Impressive Warnings.

[From the Evening Post, March 1.]

The *EVENING POST* has argued that the passage of the Blair bill would inevitably exert a bad influence upon the cause of education in the South. We are now able to present convincing evidence that the mere prospect of the bill's becoming a law has worked harm to Southern schools. In his annual report submitted to the Legislature in December, 1884, eight months after the Senate passed the Blair bill, Mr. Asbury Coward, Superintendent of Public Education in South Carolina, said that the year just closed had been marked by several circumstances which operated adversely to the advancement of educational affairs, and we call the especial attention of every thoughtful person to the circumstance which he cites as last and most important:

The short and unremunerative crops of 1883, the severity and inclemency of the weather last winter, the delay and difficulty experienced in planting the crops of the current year, the unusual stringency in the circulation of money, which has cramped so generally the business interests of our people, all tended to hinder the work of the public schools. In addition to these drawbacks, the discussion of the policy of Federal aid for the suppression of illiteracy revived into active expression all the latent or hitherto silent opposition to the common-school system of the State.

There is even more startling evidence from another State as to the bad influence which the

bare prospect of receiving Federal aid has had in the South. To careful observers of Georgia's wonderful material progress during the last few years it has been a mystery that so prosperous a commonwealth did not do more to make her school system worthy of "the Empire State of the South." We have at last discovered the reason. It has been simply because her people had concluded that they were soon going to get liberal appropriations for this purpose from Washington, and consequently did not need to make greater efforts themselves to meet the necessities of the case. So long ago as November, 1882, Mr. Gustavus J. Orr, the State School Commissioner, in his report to the Legislature, condemned "the utter inadequacy of the sums which we are applying to the support of schools to the object to be accomplished"; pointed out "the urgent necessity of more liberal appropriations for schools"; showed that a tax of only one-fifth of one per cent. upon the property of the State would keep the schools in operation six months, nearly twice the period that they were then open; met the former plea of poverty by the declaration that "the time has come when we can do better"; and concluded: *"I am sure that we have reached a point where we can continue our schools in operation for six months [nearly twice the period at that time] without unduly burdening the people."*

The Legislature failed to act upon Mr. Orr's recommendation. Why? The answer to this question is given in the following letter to the EVENING POST from Mr. Woodrow Wilson, author of the work on 'Congressional Government' which has attracted so much attention, a native of the South who stoutly opposes the Blair bill, as do so many of the more clear-sighted Southerners:

In the winter of 1882-83 I spent some time in Atlanta, Ga., while the Legislature was in session. The project of Federal aid to education was already then being pushed. One day I dropped into the gallery of the State Senate Chamber for an hour, and chanced to find a discussion in progress upon a proposal to increase the appropriation for education, as Mr. Orr had urged that the State was so abundantly able to do. Only a small minority favored the measure for heavier taxation. The majority supported a counter-resolution that the Senators and Representatives of the State in Congress be requested to do all in their power to secure the passage of a law giving aid from the Federal Treasury to education in the States. I heard one speech made in opposition to this begging resolution. It was a sturdy appeal to the self-respect and independence of Georgians, in view of what the Speaker treated as the unquestioned ability of the State to support a school system worthy of so great and prosperous a commonwealth. No attempt was made by the majority to answer his argument, which, like Mr. Orr's plea, was indeed unanswerable. The majority kept silence, and contented themselves with passing the resolution appealing for outside help to do what by their very silence they confessed they were able to do themselves. It was evident that no increase in the State appropriation for public education would be voted so long as there was the least prospect of aid from Washington. The whole performance impressed me as a shameful declaration, upon the part of a well-to-do community, of its deliberate determination to enjoy the easy position of a beneficiary of the national Government to the fullest possible

extent, rather than to be independent and support a good school system by its own unaided efforts.

The morning's mail brings us two more strong proofs that the South does not need any educational appropriations from Washington. There was published at Raleigh on Saturday the annual report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in North Carolina for the last school year. This report shows that there has been an increase over the previous year in the school expenditures of \$51,693, being nearly 10 per cent.; in the number of pupils enrolled, of 13,850; in the average attendance, of 12,583; in the number of school-houses, of 214; and in the length of the school year, of nearly a week. "Upon the whole," says the Superintendent, "our educational outlook is encouraging in every aspect except one," which is the annulling by the Supreme Court of two statutes relied upon to increase the school revenues, thus requiring an increase in taxation which so thriving a State can easily stand. We have also just received the last annual report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Florida—a State where there are nearly as many negroes as whites, and consequently a heavy burden of black ignorance. The Superintendent reports that the public-school system is in a most prosperous condition, as will readily be believed when he proceeds to show that the number of schools increased during the last year from 1,504 to 1,724; and that "the number of school-children between the ages of six and twenty-one years (which is the school age by law), according to the school census taken in the year 1884, was 66,798, of whom, by the annual reports of the County Superintendents, there are enrolled for attendance upon the schools for the year ending September 30, 1885, 62,327, and in daily average attendance 45,850, a percentage of enrolment and daily attendance equal to any State in the Union as reported from the educational departments."

New England Schools Twenty Years Ago and Southern Schools Now.

[From the Evening Post of March 3]

It would be, of course, in the highest degree unjust to expect that the public-school system of the South, in most States hardly established above fifteen years, should yet equal that of New England, where public education has been the rule for generations. The only fair comparison is between the condition of Southern schools now and that of Northern schools at a period say twenty years ago. In order to present such a comparison we have procured from Mr. N. A. Luce, the Superintendent of Common Schools in Maine, a detailed statement of the whole number of children of the school age (between four and twenty-one years), the whole number of these children enrolled, the average length of the school year, and the whole amount expended for common schools for each year beginning with

1860 and ending with 1870. From this statement of Mr. Luce's it appears that the average number of children of the school age for each of these years was 229,614; the average number of these children enrolled in school, 137,410; the average length of the school year, 99 days; and the average school expenditure, \$695,059. That was the record for a New England State less than a quarter of a century ago. To-day there are but few States in the whole South where the proportion of children of the school age attending school is not larger, and in many cases decidedly larger, than the old record of 60 per cent. in Maine, as the 61 per cent. in Tennessee, 63 in South Carolina, 68 in Missouri, 73 in West Virginia, 77 in Delaware, 79 in Texas, and 93 in Florida. Even in Mississippi, where the negroes largely outnumber the whites and the load is consequently very heavy, the ratio enrolled already two years ago was 60 per cent., or Maine's former record; and in South Carolina, which has three negroes to two whites, 63 per cent., or 3 per cent. more than formerly in Maine. The average length of the school year in eight of the sixteen old slave States is 100 or more days, against Maine's 99; and the expenditure for schools in West Virginia, with a population of 618,457 in 1880, is \$997,431, against a yearly average of only \$695,059 for the decade following 1860 in Maine, which had then 628,279 people, or about 10,000 more than West Virginia now. It would have been nothing short of an outrage if anybody in 1870 had proposed to tax the whole country to help sustain schools in Maine; it is nothing short of an outrage for anybody to propose a similar thing for the South in 1886.

[From the Evening Post, March 5.]

We presented on Wednesday a comparison between the condition of public education in Maine during the decade beginning with 1860 and the state of things in the South now, based upon a detailed statement prepared for us by the Superintendent of Common Schools in the New England State. We have since received a similar statement regarding the schools of another New England State, compiled for the *EVENING POST* by Mr. Justus Dartt, Superintendent of Education for Vermont, which still further establishes our contention that the South is already doing about as well by her schools as northern New England was doing by hers twenty or twenty-five years ago. Mr. Dartt's statement shows that the average number of children of the school age (then between the ages of four and eighteen) in the years following 1860 was 87,836, and the average number of them enrolled in public schools, 68,525, being only about 78 per cent. In other words, after generations of a common-school system in Vermont, only a little over three-quarters of the children of school age ever entered

a public school-house during the year. Even in South Carolina, where the school system is only about fifteen years old, and there are three negroes to every two whites, the proportion of children of the school age attending school (178,023 out of 281,664) already exceeds 63 per cent., while in West Virginia it is 73; in Delaware, 77, in Texas—a State which many Northerners consider very backward—79, or more than Vermont's old record, and in Florida, 93. Mr. Dartt's figures show that in Vermont, twenty years ago, the average daily attendance of those children enrolled in school fell a little short of 64 per cent.; in Mississippi, during the last year, the corresponding percentage was 58; in Delaware and West Virginia, 61; in Alabama and North Carolina, 62; in Kentucky, 63; in Georgia, 66; in South Carolina, 69; in Florida, 73; and in Missouri, 75. In Vermont then the average length of the school year was 119 days; now in West Virginia and Texas it is 100 days, in Louisiana and Kentucky 102, in Missouri 113, in Virginia 120, in Delaware 157, and in Maryland 182. The average annual school expenditure per pupil enrolled in Vermont then was \$5 06, though it sank as low as \$4 16 in 1863 and \$4 24 in 1864; in 1884 the corresponding figures were \$4 59 in Virginia, \$5 99 in West Virginia, \$6 78 in Texas, \$6 88 in Delaware, \$8 13 in Missouri, and \$10 09 in Maryland. The sturdy manhood of Vermont during the period between 1860 and 1865 would have resented the suggestion that the State needed Federal assistance to bring her schools up to a proper level, and the most hopeful sign for the South is the fact that so many sturdy men are found there who represent a similar suggestion in 1886.

To anybody who doubts the capacity of the South to educate her own children, or the wisdom of leaving her to work out the problem alone, just as Vermont was left when her schools were in such hard case a quarter of a century ago, we commend a careful examination of the reports submitted by the superintendents of education in the various States. Remembering that, as Senator Vance, of North Carolina, frankly confessed in an address delivered to the people of his State a few weeks ago, their "forefathers did not believe in the education of the masses," it is simply marvellous that in a period of only about fifteen years the common-school system has got such a firm footing. Still more encouraging is the spirit of enthusiasm and of self-denial which is manifested. In Florida, as in other parts of the South, well-to-do people before the war and in the first years after the war used to send their children to private schools. In Florida now, Mr. A. J. Russell, Superintendent of Public Instruction, writes the *EVENING POST*, in response to an inquiry regarding the present custom:

Our people are all taxed for the support of the public schools, and do not like to pay for the same commodity twice. Besides, they have learned to pluck out of their hearts the foolish prejudice of

former days against the common herd, and they now realize the great compensation in community between the poor and the rich, the crude and the refined, of our common humanity. Our public schools are very fine and admirably conducted—indeed, our teachers have learned that their employment depends entirely upon their efficiency—and for these reasons private schools do not any longer flourish well with us.

The biennial report of Mr. Bernard L. Butcher, Superintendent of Free Schools in West Virginia, is most interesting for the manifold proofs which it furnishes of the growing willingness of the people to tax all their energies to educate their children. West Virginia is, like Vermont, a mountainous and thinly settled State, and consequently the County Superintendent often finds it a difficult matter to visit all the schools under his charge; but so zealous are these men that they frequently report discharging their duty when they have had to travel long distances on foot. The truth is that West Virginia, Florida, and more than one other Southern State promise soon to be abreast of States like Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, and it is absurd to talk of taxing New England for their benefit.

Why the Government Should Not Help.

[From the Evening Post, March 11.]

We have watched with care the leading newspapers of Georgia, like the *Atlanta Constitution* and the *Savannah News*, to see whether any exception would be taken to our demonstration, from the official report of the State School Commissioner and the recorded action of the Legislature, that "the Empire State of the South" had refused to make a necessary and feasible increase of the school fund itself because the mere prospect of the passage of the Blair bill had aroused the expectation that the money needed would be obtained from the Federal Treasury. It will be remembered that, in his report to the Legislature in November, 1882, Mr. Gustavus J. Orr, the School Commissioner, condemned "the utter inadequacy of the sums which we are applying to the support of schools to the object to be accomplished"; pointed out "the urgent necessity of more liberal appropriations for schools"; showed that a tax of only one-fifth of one per cent. upon the property of the State would yield \$517,050, which, added to the existing fund, would keep the schools in operation six months, nearly twice the period that they were then open; met the former plea of poverty by the declaration that "the time has come when we can do better," and concluded: "I am sure that we have reached a point where we can continue our schools in operation for six months without unduly burdening the people." It will be remembered also that, when the Legislature took up this question a few weeks later, the majority substituted a counter-resolution that the Senators and Representatives of the State in Congress be requested to do all in their power to secure the passage of the law

giving aid from the Federal Treasury to education in the States, under which Georgia would receive the first year from Washington \$586,225, or practically the same sum as the proposed tax would yield, nobody attempting any answer to the manly speech against the begging resolution of one member, who made a sturdy appeal to the self-respect and independence of Georgians, in view of what he treated as the unquestioned ability of the State to support a school system worthy of so great and prosperous a commonwealth. No Georgia paper has ventured to dispute or question a single count in this indictment. It must, therefore, be accepted as established that the mere prospect of receiving Federal aid has exerted an effect upon educational interests in Georgia no less disastrous than that produced by the Western Reserve fund upon the schools of Connecticut fifty years ago.

The *EVENING POST* at the beginning pronounced the Blair scheme "a bill to promote mendicancy," and it appeals to the unquestioned record of the bad influence exerted by the mere prospect of the bill's becoming a law, not only in Georgia, but in South Carolina and elsewhere, as full justification of the characterization. We are glad to observe that the *Atlanta Constitution* has self-respect enough to cease anything like vigorous advocacy, and contents itself with an evidently half-hearted and halting endorsement of the measure. The *Savannah News* has also progressed so far as to relinquish its old pronounced position in favor of the scheme, and now contents itself with asking, "Why should not the Government help?" Simply because the National Government should not do anything for a State which the State can do itself. Georgia can "continue her schools in operation for six months" of the year, which is as long as they are kept open in most Northern States with a corresponding density of population, and long enough to dispel the illiteracy among all except the adults, whose case is of course hopeless. The reason why a State like Georgia should do this alone is the same reason why a man who is now abundantly able to make his own living should support himself by his own efforts rather than ask charity on the ground that he had a long streak of bad luck twenty or twenty-five years ago, especially if the old trouble was chiefly his own fault. We are not surprised that the Georgia papers are changing their tone. They can only support the bill on the ground that Georgia is too poor to educate her children, and that involves the suppression from their news columns of all the manifold evidences of the State's wonderful growth and prosperity, not merely for the three or four weeks that the bill was before the Senate, but for the months which may elapse before it is taken up in the House. A newspaper of the *Constitution's* enterprise in collecting and publishing the news could never stand such a strain.

The Mayo Myth.

[From the Evening Post, March 12.]

The study of myths has long constituted one of the most fascinating branches of modern literature. Few things are more interesting than the tracing of how one of these delusions has taken captive the imagination of a whole people, and even left its impress upon the course of a nation's history.

Such investigations are commonly supposed to be purely the province of the antiquarian, who mouses among the scanty records and the vague traditions of a far remote past in some half-civilized land. But this conventional restriction upon the field of inquiry is altogether too narrow. The myth still survives, not only among barbarous tribes, but among the most progressive nations. A striking illustration of this truth has been presented in the United States during the last few years.

When Senator Blair originally presented his scheme for Federal aid to education in the South, he produced as the chief authority for its necessity a person named Mayo. When people asked why the nation should make such a revolutionary departure in government as to assume for the first time a share in the maintenance of schools in the various States, the answer always was: "Mr. Mayo says it is necessary." When anybody inquired why the Southern people did not raise more money in order to secure better schools, the reply promptly came: "Mr. Mayo says they cannot stand any heavier taxation." When a doubter suggested that the schools which they already had were steadily and rapidly dispelling illiteracy among the only class where it can be dispelled—the persons who are not too old to attend school—the impertinence was sharply rebuked by the announcement: "Mr. Mayo says there are four million children in the South who are not getting any decent education." Indeed, the main support of the whole argument that the South needs educational appropriations from Washington has been all along the popular faith in what may be called the Mayo myth—the belief, in other words, that there was a being gifted with omniscience in all matters concerning public schools in every part of the country, whose decision that the Blair bill should become a law could be disregarded by the nation only at such risk of ruin as no prudent nation would venture to run.

The vitality of this myth has been something extraordinary. Show by a mathematical demonstration, as plain as that two and two make four, that an old slave State like Missouri or Texas has as many of her children in school as an old free State like Maine or New Hampshire, and gives them as long a school year: the victim of the myth considered it sufficient answer, "But Mr. Mayo says that the Blair bill ought to be passed, and Mr. Mayo knows." There was but

one person in the wide world who could shake such a delusion, and that person was Mr. Mayo.

The success of a myth necessarily involves an implicit faith. The suggestion of applying to the object of a myth the prosaic rules which govern among ordinary men in mundane affairs has been resented by the devout, in all ages and among all peoples, as nothing short of sacrilege. We have seen this principle illustrated in the present case. When the *EVENING POST* a few weeks ago ventured to hint a doubt of Mr. Mayo's omniscience, true believers in the myth, in the *Springfield Republican* office and elsewhere, lifted their hands in holy horror and loudly invoked condign vengeance upon the abandoned infidel. With such faithful followers it seemed hopeless to break the god's sway. But he has at last done the work himself at a single stroke, by writing a letter (which was published in the *EVENING POST*.) At the very outset Mr. Mayo admits that it may be "an open question" whether or not he is the safest guide who ever offered to lead a nation, and asks people to consider "the relative value" of his testimony and that of other people. In short, he abandons that supernatural plane upon which he has hitherto rested, amid the adulation of awe-struck worshippers, and offers to discuss matters on the basis of a common humanity. No myth could survive such *felo de se*.

Treating Mr. Mayo, therefore, with his express permission, as a human being, we shall proceed to show what slight foundation there ever was for the belief in his omniscience, which has been so long and so widely held, and which still survives in some benighted quarters. He complains, at the outset, that it is unfair to "compare the present condition of education in the South with certain shortcomings in the country-school keeping of New England." But the *EVENING POST* makes no such comparison. We place side by side, not isolated communities, but entire States; not a few "old towns depleted of their younger people by emigration," but whole Northern States and whole Southern States. If the average in a New England State is brought down by the small and short schools in thinly-settled hill towns, it is also lifted up by the large and long schools in the populous cities and chief towns. When one wants to know whether or not a certain State has good schools as compared with another State, he does not ask a man who has visited *some* town in the one State for his observations, and another man who has visited *some* town in the other State for his; but he examines the official reports, which show for each State what proportion of all the children attend school, how long on the average schools are kept open for their instruction, and how much is expended for each pupil.

For the purpose of presenting at a glance a comprehensive comparison between Southern and Northern schools, we have compiled from

the latest reports of the Superintendents of Education (generally for the year 1884, but in a few cases for 1885) a table which presents the percentage of all children of the school age who are enrolled in public schools, the average daily attendance of those children who attend school, the average length of the school year, and the average amount expended per pupil, for a number of States in New England, the South, and the West. With the exception of Delaware and Maryland, the Southern States are all large and thinly settled, Florida, for example, having but 5 inhabitants to the square mile, Texas 6, Arkansas 15, West Virginia 25, South Carolina 33, and Virginia 38. It would therefore be obviously unjust to compare them with small and densely peopled States like Massachusetts, which has 222 people to the square mile, or Rhode Island, which has 255. The only fair comparison is with New England States like Maine, with 22 people to the square mile; Vermont, with 36, and New Hampshire, with 38; or with Western States like Nebraska, Minnesota, and Kansas. The school age is from five to twenty years in most Southern States, and in the Northern States selected, except New Hampshire, where it is nominally only from five to fifteen, but Superintendent Patterson informs us that children attend school by thousands outside these limits, so that the only fair test of enrolment there as elsewhere seems to be the division of the whole number attending school by the whole number of persons between five and twenty years. The following table presents the salient

	Per cent. enrolled.	Average daily attendance.	Length of school-year in days.	Amount expended per pupil.
Maine.....	69	68	104	\$7 75
New Hampshire	64	71	100	9 63
Vermont.....	72	68	126	8 37
Delaware.....	77	61	157	6 88
Maryland.....	55	51	182	10 09
Virginia.....	52	57	120	4 59
West Virginia.	73	61	100	5 99
Missouri.....	68	75	113	8 13
Texas.....	79	100	100	6 78
Florida.....	93	73	90	5 37
Tennessee.....	61	59	78	2 73
Minnesota.....	62	45	112	12 63
Kansas.....	74	68	115	9 50
Nebraska.....	66	60	120	13 39
Alabama.....	56	62	83	2 30
Mississippi.....	60	58	77½	3 01
South Carolina.	63	69	70	2 41
North Carolina.	56	62	62	3 12
Georgia.....	57	66	65	2 12
Kentucky.....	49	63	102	2 48
Arkansas.....	48	...	...	3 67
Louisiana.....	19	69	102	4 24
Maine, 1860-70.	60	78	90	5 05
N. H., 1860-70.	85	65	97	4 01
V'mont, 1860-70	78	61	118	5 06

figures, first, for the three Northern States in New England; second, for the eight old slave States furthest advanced in public education; third, for the three Western States just mentioned; fourth, for the remaining former slave States; and, finally, for Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont during the decade between 1860 and 1870, as compiled for the *EVENING POST* by the heads of the educational departments for those States.

Mr. Mayo says that "not one-third of Southern children and youth between the ages of six and twenty are or ever have been in any effective school." The table shows that more than two-thirds of all children of school age attend school in Delaware, West Virginia, Missouri, Florida, and Texas; almost two-thirds in South Carolina, Mississippi, and Tennessee; and more than half in Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama, to which should be added Arkansas, its percentage of only 48 being due to the fact that nearly a third of the districts failed to report their enrolment.

The stress of Mr. Mayo's remarks must therefore lie upon the adjective "effective," as applied to school. We must regard the selection of the adjective as unhappy, since different people will inevitably interpret it in different ways. However, all will agree that no school is effective which has a poor teacher. Accepting this definition, it can be shown by official testimony that in a New England State only about one-third of the children are in any "effective" school. The last report of Mr. N. A. Luce, Superintendent of Common Schools in Maine, says, in the first place, that "of the 213,524 persons of school age in the State 67,179, or one in every three, failed to attend the schools at all during the year"; and in the second place, regarding the instruction given the two-thirds who do attend, that "the conditions are such that every third school must, perforce, secure a cheap teacher, and hence a poor teacher." If therefore only about a third of Southern children attend any "effective" school, their condition does not differ greatly from that of the children in Maine.

Nor is Maine's case exceptional. The Connecticut Board of Education stated in their report to the Legislature last January that "in most of our schools the teachers are decidedly not equal to their work"; that "many teachers are not familiar even with the common-school branches they are undertaking to teach"; that "the answers given to questions about common-school studies by some persons who are at present teaching in the schools of Connecticut reveal blank abysses of ignorance which in a teacher are appalling to contemplate"; and that of 406 who tried to pass a State examination, which was "by no means too difficult for any one who is fit to teach," only 70 passed well enough to receive a certificate of the lowest grade. The teaching in New England schools now does not differ materially from what it was a generation ago; certainly

nobody will claim that, on the whole, it is not as good as it used to be. Yet under such teaching boys and girls were so well educated that the percentage of illiteracy reported by the census of 1880 was only $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. in Maine, and 4 1-5 per cent. in Connecticut.

But Mr. Mayo is sadly mistaken in supposing that "every well-informed school-man of the South will substantiate" his assertion regarding the effectiveness of the instruction. So well-informed a school man as Mr. A. J. Russell, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Florida—a State where there are nearly as many negroes as whites, and yet where of 66,798 children of both races between the ages of six and twenty-one years, 63,327, or a trifle over 93 per cent., attend school—says upon this very point in a recent letter to the *EVENING POST*: "Our public schools are very fine and admirably conducted: indeed, our teachers have learned that their employment depends entirely upon their efficiency."

Mr. Solomon Palmer, Superintendent of Education in Alabama, in his report for the year ending last September, after speaking of the growing demand by the public that teachers shall be trained for their work, says that "to meet this demand for teachers specially educated and fitted for the profession, Alabama has established and now has in successful operation six normal schools, three for the white and three for the colored race," with 1,276 students during the last year. The last biennial report of Mr. Bernard L. Butcher, State Superintendent of Free Schools in West Virginia, contains the testimony of another "well-informed school-man of the South," who fails to substantiate Mr. Mayo's assertion. Referring to the large increase in the proportion of teachers who are women, the report says: "We are fortunate in being able to draw into the service of the State the daughters of many of the families of our best people. This is true now of the whole South. No people in the whole history of the past have such a magnificent contingent of culture and enthusiasm to draw upon for the primary training of the whole population as has, through the fortunes and misfortunes of civil war, fallen to the lot of the Southern States."

Mr. Mayo speaks of "the short terms of the country school" in the South. He still retains the contempt for "columns of figures" which befits the hero of a myth, but now that he has come down upon the plane of humanity, we must hold him to merely human methods of comparison. Our table gives the average length of the school-year for each State, but it should be explained that in more than one instance the figures are for the rural districts alone. Yet, it appears that in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Louisiana, and Texas—eight of the sixteen old slave States—the school-year ranges from 100 up to 182 days, against 100 in New Hampshire now, and 99 in

Maine and 97 in New Hampshire from 1860 to 1870; while only North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia furnish less than 75 days.

Mr. Mayo speaks of "the difficulty of regular attendance" at the South. "Difficulty" there may be, but the table shows that it is so generally overcome that the percentage of average daily attendance is larger in Missouri and Florida than in New Hampshire; larger even in South Carolina than in Maine, Vermont, or Kansas; larger in Delaware, West Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Kentucky than in Nebraska; and even larger in the Southern States which make the poorest showing than in Minnesota.

Mr. Mayo speaks of the "meagre salaries" of teachers at the South. In Mississippi the average monthly pay of teachers, of both sexes, is \$31 20; in Maine, \$32 59 for male teachers, and \$16 28 for females. Mr. Mayo, of course, knows that "a dollar goes a good deal further" at the South than at the North, in expenditures for schools as in every thing else; in other words, that an average expenditure of \$5 per pupil in a Southern State is equivalent to a per capita of at least \$6 to \$8 in a far Northern State.

That the omniscience of a supernatural being should have been attributed to one who thus proves to be the most fallible of mortals, and that the Congress of the United States should have proposed, upon the vague outgivings of such an oracle, to revolutionize the established educational policy of the Government, will be accounted in future years one of the most extraordinary exhibitions of popular superstition on record; and the Mayo myth must hereafter occupy a prominent place in every history of the world's mythology.

"Mendicancy" the Only Proper Word.

[From the *Evening Post*, March 16.]

The Jacksonville *Times-Union*, the leading newspaper of Florida, is one of those independent and progressive journals whose growing success constitutes one of the most hopeful signs for the future of the South. In the contest over the Blair bill its proper place has been with such manly opponents of the subsidy scheme as the Louisville *Courier-Journal* and the Galveston *News*, and we have been glad to observe that its support of the measure has appeared perfunctory and shame-faced. In a recent issue the *Times-Union* says:

The New York *EVENING POST* is making a very vigorous opposition to the Blair Educational Bill. Its point that if the States are assisted from the Federal Treasury they will reduce the amount which they themselves now raise from taxation for school purposes, or that they would relax their own efforts in the cause of education, we do not believe to be well taken. Certainly in the case of Florida the chief anxiety would be to have the State tax sufficient to secure the full benefits of the share assigned her under the provisions of the bill.

Very well. Waive this point as to the probable effect of national bounty upon State effort, and consider only admitted facts. In his last annual report, Mr. A. J. Russell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction for Florida, says that "the number of school children between the ages of six and twenty-one years (which is the school age by law), according to the school census taken in the year 1884, was 66,798, of whom, by the annual reports of the county superintendents, there are enrolled for attendance upon the schools for the year ending September 30, 1885, 62,327, and in daily average attendance 45,850, a percentage of enrolment and daily attendance equal to any State in the Union, as reported from the educational departments." As compared with Mr. Blair's own State, Florida has 98 per cent. of her children of school age enrolled in school, against only 64 per cent. in New Hampshire, and the average daily attendance of those enrolled is 73 per cent. against only 71 per cent. in New Hampshire; the average length of the school-year in the two States is almost the same; and as to the character of the instruction, Mr. Russell says: "Our public schools are very fine and admirably conducted." Will the *Times-Union* please state what just reason there is why New Hampshire, a stagnating State, should be taxed to help support a school system already equal to her own in Florida, a State which, as the *Times-Union* has so often and so clearly shown, is growing in prosperity at a wonderful pace?

[From the Evening Post, March 17.]

The Atlanta *Constitution* says that, if the Blair bill becomes a law, Georgia will receive from Washington the first year \$586,225, which is "just about the sum that the State appropriates to public schools at present," and combined with the amount now raised would be "sufficient to keep open good common schools in every neighborhood for both white and colored children during at least six months in each year." But, as the *Constitution* is well aware, so long ago as November, 1882, School Commissioner Orr told the Georgia Legislature in his annual report that a school tax of one-fifth of 1 per cent. could be levied "without unduly burdening the people": that such a tax would yield upon the valuation of the State at that time \$517,050—and probably by this time, with the increase in valuation, just about \$586,225; and that this amount, added to the existing school fund, "would continue our schools in operation for six months." Georgia is much better able to stand the tax which Mr. Orr recommended in 1886 than in 1882. The condition of the negroes used to be given as an excuse for not providing better schools, but that can be no longer urged, for the *Constitution* itself said of that race only last month: "The great mass of them are quiet, industrious, and comfortable. They are learning

the lessons of economy and prudence. They are beginning to save money; they are acquiring property, and they are making themselves homes"—a description which applies equally well to the great laboring population of foreign birth in Northern States. Will the *Constitution* please tell us why the rest of the nation ought to be taxed to keep Georgia schools open six months—which is longer than schools are open in some Northern States—when a State tax which could be levied "without unduly burdening the people" would raise the same sum that the Blair bill would allot the State next year? Is not "mendicancy" the proper word, and the only proper word, to describe the willingness of a rich and growing State like Georgia to have her schools in part supported by increasing the taxes of poor and stationary States like Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, which find their burden already as great as they can well bear?

Hopeless and Curable Illiteracy.

[From the Evening Post, March 23.]

The *Christian Union* is almost the only journal of character and influence in the whole North which longer supports the Blair bill unreservedly, and it plainly betrays the disquieting effect of the EVENING POST's arguments against the measure. More than once during the discussion has it shifted its ground and begged the question. It began on January 28 by asserting that "an appropriation for education in the South is the payment of a debt due by justice," which must be paid without question, like any other just debt. But on February 18 it admitted that "if it were demonstrable that national aid would impede, not promote, public education, that would be conclusive against it." The EVENING POST thereupon demonstrated from the official records, in the most convincing possible way, that "national aid would impede public education," by showing that the mere prospect of such aid had already impeded it. But the *Christian Union* now (March 18) deserts its original position, that "an appropriation for education in the South is the payment of a debt due by justice," growing out of the nation's responsibility for the slavery which chiefly produced the illiteracy, and advances another very different proposition, that "it is the function of the Federal Government to secure the education of all sections and all citizens"; while, after expressly admitting in February that a demonstration of the bad effect of national aid would be "conclusive against" its January platform, it declares in March regarding its new proposition: "Nor from its maintenance shall we be turned aside by evidence to show that gratuities pauperize."

The *Christian Union* complains that "the EVENING POST, which leads the opposition to the Blair bill, does not discuss the fundamental question—this, namely, whether illiteracy in the late

slave States is properly a State burden or a national burden." And it proceeds to argue, in a long and labored article, that illiteracy in every State is properly a national burden; "that it is the province of the Federal Government to see to it that education is provided for all sections and all citizens of the Republic; that this as much pertains to the Federal Government as the management of the Post-office or the national currency." The EVENING POST has not discussed this question, because it has never before known any reputable journal to advance a doctrine so hostile to the most firmly-established traditions of the American Government and the most deeply-rooted sentiments of the American people. In all the many pleas for the Blair bill, in the Senate and in the press alike, it has invariably been urged by every advocate that it could only be justified as a temporary measure, which could never become a precedent for a permanent policy; that it was a piece of "emergency legislation," on the same plane as the "war measures," to be excused solely as a necessity to meet a special exigency in the South, and never to be adduced as justification of a system so repugnant to the whole spirit of our institutions as that of continuous Federal supervision over education in all the States.

We should therefore suspend the discussion here if the *Christian Union* would rest its advocacy of the pending bill solely upon the ground that "it is the function of the Federal Government to secure the education of all sections and all citizens." But it lacks the confidence to do this. Knowing that the measure would receive practically no support upon that ground, it falls back upon the familiar old plea for Federal aid as a necessity to meet an exceptional situation in the South. "The argument for present Federal action," it says, "rests on two propositions: first, the right of any nation to do anything which is necessary for its self-preservation; and, second, the constitutional duty of this particular nation, under the Federal system, to do whatever may be necessary to guarantee a republican form of government to the several States." It holds that education is necessary for these two purposes, and consequently that Federal appropriations are now necessary for the South. "It avails nothing," it adds, "to say that some Southern States are already doing as well for their children as some Northern States. This would avail against a plea for charity; it is not availing against a plea for justice." But in the very next sentence it shifts its ground, and begs the question again. A plea for justice can only be met by proof that it is not really justice which is pleaded for; considerations of expediency have no place. Yet, after all its talk about the matter being one of "justice" alone, the *Christian Union* admits that the question of Federal aid to Southern education is really, as everybody else holds, a question of expediency, and that the

"debt" need not be paid if the money is not required by the putative creditor. We quote its exact language:

For that purpose [viz., to avail against a plea for justice] it must be shown that the States are already doing all that needs to be done to save the nation from the perils of ignorance; that there is no danger, or that it is not imminent; or that it is certain to be avoided or vanquished without national action.

Declining discussion of the merely theoretical question whether permanent Federal supervision of education in the States is a wise national policy, we meet the *Christian Union* upon the exceedingly practical ground of the expediency of the proposed temporary measure, where it finally takes its stand and proceeds to throw up entrenchments of vague generalities about the appalling dimensions of Southern illiteracy. It says, for instance:

According to the census of 1880, 6,000,000 of the 36,000,000 of persons over ten years of age in the United States could not write, and nearly 5,000,000 could not read. About one in thirteen of the entire number of voters could not read their ballots. Who will say that this does not give food for reflection? That it does not indicate imminent peril? That it does not require a vigorous employment of all national resources for national safety? The peril of this illiteracy is increased by its local concentration. Mr. James shows that, according to the census of 1880, in nine Southern States over one-third of the population could not read.

The *Christian Union*, like so many other well-meaning but short-sighted advocates of the Blair bill, has overlooked the salient fact in the situation: *Much more than two-thirds of the illiteracy in the South in 1880 was hopeless, because much more than two-thirds of the illiterates were too old to attend school.* As one argument for Federal aid, the fact is always cited that in 1880 millions of persons over ten years of age in the South could not read; and as another, the fact that a large proportion of the voters could not read. Rightly considered, the second fact answers the first, and the two combined constitute a strong argument against Federal aid. The chief reason why millions of persons over ten years of age in the South cannot read is because millions of voters, and of grown-up mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters of voters, cannot read. It is possible to demonstrate this clearly from the last census by a table which shows, for each of the sixteen old slave States, first, the whole number of persons over ten years of age who could not write; second, the number of such white persons over twenty-one years of age; third, the number of such colored persons over twenty-one years of age; fourth, the whole number of adult illiterates of both races; and, fifth, the number of illiterates between ten and twenty-one years of age.

It will be seen that in 1880 there were in the South 4,715,395 persons over ten years of age who could not write, and that of the whole number no less than 2,961,371—being 63 per cent., or almost two thirds of all—were grown-up men and women, who would never go to school if they had a chance. It is these three millions of

hopeless adult illiterates—two millions of them negroes born slaves before 1860, and the other

	Illiterates over 10 years old.	White illiterates over 21 years old.	Colored illiterates over 21 years old.	Total adult illiterates of both races.	Illiterates between 10 and 21 years old.
Alabama.....	438,447	60,174	206,878	267,052	166,296
Arkansas.....	202,015	50,235	68,444	118,679	83,336
Delaware.....	19,414	6,462	7,886	14,397	5,017
Florida.....	80,188	10,885	89,763	54,688	2,546
Georgia.....	520,416	71,698	247,814	319,011	201,466
Kentucky.....	348,892	124,728	90,789	215,451	132,931
Louisiana.....	318,880	84,818	178,789	213,602	104,778
Maryland.....	134,488	34,155	66,857	101,512	35,976
Mississippi.....	373,301	27,789	268,122	288,911	18,299
Missouri.....	276,754	89,924	40,367	130,281	78,473
N. Carolina.....	463,975	116,437	174,152	290,589	173,386
S. Carolina.....	369,848	84,885	200,065	284,898	135,450
Tennessee.....	416,722	118,734	126,989	245,673	165,040
Texas.....	316,432	69,117	121,827	186,944	129,488
Virginia.....	430,382	71,004	214,940	285,944	145,008
W. Virginia.....	85,376	46,840	7,589	53,979	82,497
	4,715,386	961,820	1,999,551	2,961,371	1,754,024

million born but little better off intellectually as the "poor whites" of the slavery era—who constitute the bulk of that great total which is always paraded as a conclusive argument for Federal aid. They ought, on the contrary, to be entirely eliminated from the case; for a dozen Blair bills, appropriating a dozen times \$77,000,000 apiece, would never produce any effect upon people who are too old to go to school. Moreover, three millions by no means represents all the people who were hopeless illiterates in 1880. Half of the persons between ten and twenty-one had reached their fifteenth year, and but few persons attend school after they are fifteen. Of these illiterates between fifteen and twenty-one fully half had never been able to attend school. Before 1880 the school system was not well established in a number of Southern States, as is shown by the fact that the number of pupils in some States has since doubled. Not only, therefore, were almost two-thirds of all Southern illiterates adults, but half of the illiterates between ten and twenty-one were above fifteen and thus too old to attend school, and of this half fully half had never been able to attend school, owing to the sparseness of school privileges during their childhood. If a Blair bill had been passed in 1880, and the most approved school system ever known had been immediately established throughout the South, not merely two-thirds, but three-fourths, if not four-fifths, of all the Southern illiterates reported by the census of 1880 would have been found too old to profit by it.

Excluding the illiterates of 1880 who were too old to go to school, it is easy to prove that the curable illiteracy of 1886 is being cured so rapidly that the danger from ignorance "is certain to be avoided or vanquished without national action." The vital fact here is this: *Illiteracy has been avoided in New England by a school system no*

better than that which many Southern States already have, and which the rest can have without national aid and "without unduly burdening the people"—to quote School Commissioner Orr's expression in urging the Georgia Legislature over three years ago to increase the school tax so as to keep schools open six months in the year. In Maine only about 3 per cent. of the persons over ten years old in 1870 or in 1880 could not read, and three-fourths of these were adult foreign immigrants—largely French Canadians. Such a public-school system as Maine had previous to 1880, therefore, was good enough to "avoid" the danger of ignorance, and a corresponding system in the South now will "vanquish" that danger. A careful compilation of the Maine records, made expressly for the *EVENING POST* by Mr. N. A. Luce, State Superintendent of Common Schools, shows that between 1860 and 1870 the average percentage of all children of school age who were enrolled in school during the year was 60 per cent., and the average length of school throughout the State was ninety-nine days a year. The latest reports of Southern school superintendents (in most cases for the year 1884, and the figures for 1886 would be still better) show that in Florida, where there are nearly as many negroes as whites, 93 per cent. of all children of school age, white and black, are enrolled in school; in Texas, 79; in Delaware, 77; in West Virginia, 73; in Missouri, 68; in South Carolina, the State with most negroes, 63 per cent., or 3 per cent. more than Maine's old record; in Tennessee, 61; in Mississippi, next to South Carolina the State with most negroes proportionally, 60 per cent., or the same as formerly in Maine; and in all but four of the remaining States, within 5 per cent. of Maine's old ratio; that the average length of the school year already exceeds Maine's former record of 99 days in eight of the sixteen Southern States, ranging from 100 in West Virginia and Texas up to 182 in Maryland, while it falls below 75 days in only three of the other eight States, and in every one of these eight might be lifted above 99 days if the people would only tax themselves for schools as Maine people have always done.

"Later figures [than those of the census of 1880] are not much more encouraging," says the *Christian Union*. Is it "not much more encouraging" that, whereas only 108,074 persons attended Virginia schools the year before the census, 194,235, or almost twice as many, were enrolled in the school year 1884-5? Is it "not much more encouraging" that in Florida, within the same brief period, the number of scholars came near doubling, jumping from 38,315 to 63,327? Is it "not much more encouraging" that in Arkansas the enrolment increased from 112,233 in 1882-3 to 153,216 the next year, or nearly one-third in a twelvemonth? Is it "not much more encouraging" that, while the enumerators in 1880

found that 35 per cent. of all persons in Texas between ten and twenty-one years of age were illiterates, a census in 1884 showed that only 5 per cent. of children of school age were unable to read?

"How long at this rate," asks the *Christian Union*, "before the nation will get rid of illiteracy in the Southern States?" Obviously, so far as three-fourths or four-fifths of the illiteracy of 1880 is concerned, not until the grown-up illiterates die off, well along in the twentieth century. So far as the children of 1886 are concerned, which is the only vital question, in a very short time—if only such people as the editor of the *Christian Union* will leave the Southern States to work out their own salvation in the good old self-reliant New England way, and will cease advocacy of this worse than unnecessary, this demoralizing, this mendicancy-promoting Blair bill, "the mere discussion" of which, according to the official report of Superintendent Coward, of South Carolina, has "revived into active expression all the latent or hitherto silent opposition to the common-school system."

The South Able to Support Her Schools.

One of the stock arguments which Mr. Mayo and his faithful followers have always brought forward with a triumphant air as conclusive proof that the Southern States could not educate their children without Federal aid, was the fact that Northern States spend much more money on their school children per capita than the South could possibly afford to do. But the argument only illustrates the ignorance or carelessness of those who make it. A school system of equal merit should cost very much more in the North than in the South, by reason of the difference in the character of the population and the environment. The *Christian Union* recently made the statement that "eight Southern States, omitting those not desolated and impoverished by the war, were expending on their school children in 1883-4 \$1.59 per capita, as against \$8.69 per capita expended by the Northern States east of the Missouri River; that is, the Southern States were expending less than one-fifth as much as the Northern States." It thereupon asked, "How long, at this rate, before the nation will get rid of illiteracy in the Southern States?" It might as well cite the fact that Vermont expended in the last school year upon public schools only \$6.03 for each child of school age, while the corresponding per capita in Massachusetts was \$20.42, and expect to find that the ratio of illiteracy in Vermont is more than three times as great as in Massachusetts—instead of being less, as is actually the case—because Massachusetts spends more than three times as much upon children of school age as Vermont does.

The reason why Massachusetts spends more than three times as much as Vermont per capita

of school children is because Massachusetts is a thickly settled State, with the greater part of her people living in cities and large towns, which have expensive systems of graded and high schools in operation nine or ten months in the year, while Vermont is a thinly settled agricultural State, with but two places having over 10,000 inhabitants, and with nearly all her children attending the cheaply conducted district school about five months a year. The same reason will enable the South to keep down the percentage of illiteracy to Vermont's creditable record without expending more than a quarter or a third as much as Massachusetts does. Between the Potomac and the Rio Grande, and between the Ohio and the Gulf, there were in 1880 only 70 places having 4,000 or more inhabitants, while in Massachusetts alone there were 85, and in all "the Northern States east of the Missouri River" 506. It would be as absurd to expect that schools should cost as much in the South as in the North, as it would be to expect that they should cost as much in Vermont as in Massachusetts.

Another argument which is "off the same piece of goods" is the one based upon the fact that the wealth of the South in proportion to her children is far less than that of the North. The *Christian Union*, for example, says:

The assessed wealth of these eight Southern States in the same years was, in round numbers, one and a quarter billions; the assessed wealth of the Northern States (east of the Missouri), twelve and a third billions; the school children of the Southern States numbered three and a third millions, the school children of the Northern States a little over nine millions. That is, the Southern States, with one-twelfth the property of the Northern States, had one-third the children to educate.

This is the same as saying that the North has four times as much wealth to expend upon the education of each child as the South, and upon this showing the *Christian Union* declares that "it is not true that the South could give her children the necessary education if she chose to do so." We scarcely remember a more striking illustration of the dangers which attend hasty generalization. One might with equal justice declare that Vermont cannot "give her children the necessary education" because she has only one-eighteenth the wealth of Massachusetts, but nearly one-third as many children. The assessed valuation of Vermont in 1880 was \$86,806,775, and the number of children of the school age is 99,463, or \$873 of wealth for each child; the valuation of Massachusetts, \$1,584,756,802, and the number of children 343,810, or \$4,609 for each child, being almost six times as much per child as in Vermont. The reason of course is because Vermont is almost exclusively an agricultural community, while Massachusetts has diversified industries, a host of cities and towns, and all the aggregations of capital natural to a thickly settled State. The South is almost entirely composed of rural communities, like Vermont, and the argument for the Blair bill from the South's valuation being smaller than

the North's is as ridiculous as it would be to say that Vermont cannot properly educate her children, as she has always done, because she is not nearly so rich as Massachusetts.

Equally fallacious is the plea that taxation for schools in the South is already as large as in the North, and that the rate cannot be increased. Such comparisons always disregard the salient fact that in the South the bulk of the school fund comes from the State tax, while in the North the State tax forms only a small part of the whole amount expended upon schools, local taxation being the chief reliance. No better statement of the case can be made than is to be found in the last report of Mr. Solomon Palmer, Superintendent of Education in Alabama, who says:

If our system is to be kept up to its present standard of efficiency, there will have to be an increase of school funds to meet the demands of our rapidly increasing school population. At present the entire school revenues of the State, including poll tax, are only sufficient to pay \$1 12 to each child within the school age. In proportion to population and value of taxable property, Alabama appropriates directly from her annual revenues for school purposes as much, perhaps, as any other State. For instance, the rich and populous State of Pennsylvania, for the school year ending June 2, 1884, paid \$5,403,634 41 for the tuition of the children of the public schools, only \$1,000,000 of which was appropriated directly from the general revenues of the State, all the rest being raised by local taxation in the cities, towns, and districts where used. The same might be said of New York, Michigan, Indiana, and other States which spend millions for school purposes mainly raised by local taxation.

That the South can sustain local taxation for her schools as well as the North is clearly shown by the same report. Mr. Palmer says upon this point:

I would earnestly urge upon towns, villages, and other populous school districts the necessity of raising by local taxation a sufficient school fund, when taken in connection with the amount appropriated directly by the State, to maintain good graded schools at least eight months in the year. I am gratified to know that the people in many parts of the State are waking up to a sense of the importance of local taxation for public schools. For many years Mobile has expended for school purposes \$20,000 or more in excess of the annual State appropriation, raised by local taxation principally. Mr. Palmer then describes in detail the expenditures for such purposes in a number of cities and towns, which are maintaining fine graded schools by means of local taxation, and adds: It is to be hoped in a year or two every town and village and in the near future every school district in the State can boast of a well-conducted and prosperous graded school in which tuition is absolutely free.

Superintendent Palmer's report shows conclusively—and every other Southern Superintendent's report shows the same thing—that what the Southern people need is not money from the Federal Treasury for their schools, but a disposition to pay local taxes for educational purposes, as Northern people have always done. His re-

port shows also that the Southern people have been developing this disposition in a normal way, and the worst feature of the Blair bill is its already demonstrated tendency to check this disposition, by holding out the hope of subsidies from Washington. The *Selma Times*, one of the leading newspapers of Alabama and a journal which declares its belief, not only in education generally, but “especially in the education of the negro because he stands more in need of it than the white man,” strenuously opposes Federal aid upon this ground, as follows:

Already the insidious influence of the Blair bill has been at work; there has been a falling off in interest among the Southern States in their schools; appropriations have been kept back in expectation that the Federal pie would be handed round. If the Federal pie is ever handed round, we shall see our own systems debauched by contact with a system under Federal supervision; we shall see the negro once more looking to Washington for sympathy and support, and we shall see the white man utterly indifferent to the fate of “the nation's ward.” This appropriation will be a perpetual one if it is ever once made, and will in our judgment crush State pride in education; it will strain more than they ever have been strained the relations of whites and blacks, and will leave us finally dependent upon Congressional bounty.

While some Southern papers still talk about the South's being unable to support her schools alone, there is a rising tide of indignation among self-respecting journals in that part of the country at the assumption that their section should accept the rôle of a mendicant. The *Selma Times* speaks for this growing element in the Southern press when it says that “it is idle to talk of the South's not being able to educate the negro,” and consequently of her requiring Federal aid, “in the presence of what she has already done.” The *Lynchburg Virginian*, one of the leading newspapers in another State, displays the same spirit. Referring to the fact that three colleges in Virginia “have done a great deal of begging in the North,” it says that the begging “has been downright humiliating,” and it expresses the hope that if any Northern people are meditating a favorable response to such appeals, “accompanied with doleful pictures of the pinching poverty of our people,” they will “decide not to give a stiver.” The *Virginian* adds:

We are not as yet, in Virginia, reduced to a condition of mendicancy. And the opportunities of our youth for an ample education are more abundant and easier of appropriation than in most of the Northern States.

From the attempts of Mr. Mayo and his followers to convince the South that she was too poor to educate her children and should turn mendicant, the *EVENING POST* appealed with confidence to the Southern people, and such manly protests as these of the *Selma Times* and the *Lynchburg Virginian* show that this confidence was well grounded.

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